

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 16-32 are currently pending, with Claims 24-29 withdrawn from consideration. Claims 16-23 and 30 have been amended; and Claims 31 and 32 have been added by the present amendment. No new matter has been added.¹

In the outstanding Office Action, Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Publication No. 2002/0023915 A1 to Taplan (hereafter “Taplan”); and Claims 16-22 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Taplan.

In response to the rejection of Claim 23, Claim 23 has been amended to more clearly define over Taplan.

Claim 23 is directed to a glass-ceramic plate configured to cover heating elements. The glass-ceramic plate includes a first surface and a second surface substantially parallel to the first surface. Further, the glass-ceramic plate includes at least one raised portion formed above the first surface with a first thickness of the raised portion greater than a thickness of the glass-ceramic plate outside the raised portion, and at least one tapered portion following the raised portion *tapering from the first thickness of the raised portion to a reduced thickness toward an edge of the glass-ceramic plate.*

Turning now to the cited reference, Taplan describes a glass-ceramic plate for a kitchen appliance with a safe edge. This safe edge is formed by a **rounded rim** having a thickness greater than that of the plate, merging integrally and seamlessly with the plate.² Taplan describes that glass-ceramic plates require safety edging in order to protect the sharp edges and to enable the plates to be held in a tension-free manner in a kitchen appliance.³ Further, Taplan describes a plate with a profiled portion that “projects above the top and/or

¹ Amended Claims 16-23 and 30, and new Claims 31 and 32 are supported at least by Applicants’ Figures 1a-3b.

² Taplan, Abstract, and Figures 1-4 and 7.

³ Taplan, paragraph [0003].

below the bottom of the plate, thus forming a catchment of the plate.”⁴ Thus, the plate edge of Taplan is rounded, and lacks **tapering**. On the contrary, Claim 23 recites ***a tapered portion following the raised portion tapering from the first thickness of the raised portion to a reduced thickness toward an edge of the glass-ceramic plate***. Therefore, Taplan fails to teach or suggest a glass-ceramic plate with all the features recited in Claim 23. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 23 patentably defines over Taplan.

In response to the rejections of Claims 16-22 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), Claims 16-22 and 30 have been amended to recite novel and unobvious features not taught or rendered obvious by Taplan.

Claim 16 is directed to a glass-ceramic plate configured to cover heating elements and including an upper surface and a lower surface. The glass-ceramic plate further includes a bevel 35 mm or more wide formed at a first edge of the upper surface, the bevel having ***a thickness in a direction perpendicular to the lower surface of the glass-ceramic plate decreasing along the bevel in a direction from an interior portion of the plate to the first edge***. As discussed above, Taplan describes a glass-ceramic plate with a rounded profiled portion which projects above the top and below the bottom of the plate. The plate edge described by Taplan is rounded, lacking a ***thickness in a direction perpendicular to the lower surface of the glass-ceramic plate decreasing along the bevel in a direction from an interior portion of the plate to the first edge***. Therefore, Taplan fails to teach or suggest a glass-ceramic plate with all the features recited in Claim 16.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that because Taplan specifically describes that a **rounded safety rim** is desired on a plate, it would not be obvious based on the teachings of Taplan to arrive at a glass-ceramic plate with a bevel 35 mm or more wide formed at a first edge of the upper surface of the glass-ceramic plate, the bevel having ***a thickness in a***

⁴ Taplan, paragraph [0015].

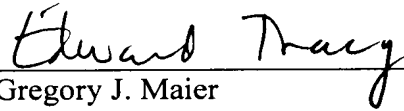
direction perpendicular to the lower surface of the glass-ceramic plate decreasing along the bevel in a direction from an interior portion of the plate to the first edge. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 16 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over Taplan.

New Claims 31 and 32 have been added to vary the scope of patent protection and are believed to further patentably define over Taplan.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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